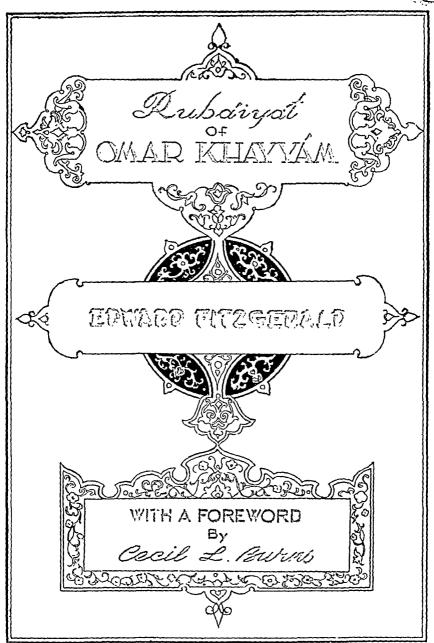
Rubájyát of Omar Khazyám



Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
To-Day of past Regrets and future Fears—
To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's sev'n Thousand Years.

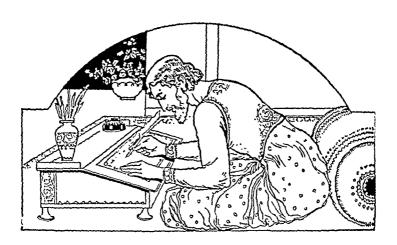


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^{*}The first Edition of the translation of the Rubaiyat differs so much from the fourth Edition, that it has been thought better to print it in full, instead of recording the differences.



preface

It was just one of the strangest and happiest accidents that occasionally happen in the history of letters by which Omar, an eleventh-century astronomer-poet of Persia, was raised to the pinnacle of prominence and popularity from the limbo of oblivion in which he had otherwise been destined to live.

The day must have been auspicious when sometime in eighteen-sixties two friends of Dante Gabriel Rossetti found in an obscure bookshop near Leicester Square a small volume entitled 'Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam—The Astronomer-poet of Persia'. It was anonymously published in 1859 and priced at five shillings. The friends of Rossetti bought a copy each for a penny, and when Rossetti was shown the dainty little volume he was excited beyond measure—an excitement which proved happily infectious, as Swinburne readily caught it, and what followed has been told by Swinburne himself:

"Having read it, Rossetti and I invested upwards of six pence a piece—or possibly three pence—I would not wish to exaggerate our extravagance—in copies at that not exorbitant price. Next day we thought we might get some more for presents among our friends, but the man at the stall asked two pence. We took a few, and left him. In a week or two, if I am not much mistaken, the remaining copies were sold at a guinea; I have since—as I daresay you have—seven copies offered for still more absurd prices....."

In this manner the *Rubaiyat* leapt into fame. Believing that scarcely anyone would be

interested in the work, Fitzegerald had got only 250 copies printed and almost the whole lot he had given to his publisher Quaritch, who also like the public at large did not know that a great poem lav embedded in this anonymous little volume. The credit belonged to Rossetti and Swinburne for the discovery of the one poem that made Fitzgerald famous within ten of its publication. And to-day some ninety years afterwards, the words with which Fitzgerald gave expression to the eternal passion and the eternal pain of the human soul, the words which re-interpreted the elegiac music of the ancient Persian philosopher-poet, have passed into the English speech and have been universally acclaimed to be the finest specimens of the poetry of pleasure and pessimism.

Himself a tolerable scholar in Persian, Fitzgerald was introduced to the unexplored riches of oriental poetry by his friend Prof. Cowell, who got copied for him a rare Persian manuscript from the Bodleian Library and this was the source of Fitzgerald's work. Fitzgerald instantly fell in love with Omar, whose meditative melancholy and highly sensitive response to the beauties of life and nature had the greatest fascination for him.

It has been repeated times without number that Fitzgerald's Quatrains are not faithful copies of the original—an assertion that does not at all detract from the merit of Fitzgerald's work which, in its own singular way, retains the force and beauty of the original. It is, as Fitzgerald himself remarked, "most ingeniously tesselated into a sort of Epicurean Eclogue in a Persian garden".

The poem is unique in its quality of grief and doubt unspoilt by bitterness; in its keen

Preface

rapture of the moment, that is always sensuous and also always melancholy, that never allows us to forget the sadness of life but also never disturbs our enjoyment of life. There is melancholy, but there is no distress; there is resignation, but there is no despair. The dream is dismissed, and the reality clasped with complacency, almost with gratitude.

The very interesting account of roses growing upon the graves of Khayyam and Fitzgerald, has been taken, with certain omissions, from the *Times of India*, and for this we are much indebted to the writer, Mr. Cecil L. Burns, and the authorities of the said journal.



THE ROSES ON OMAR KHAYYAM'S TOMB AND FITZGERALD'S GRAVE

BY

CECIL L. BURNS

So long as English literature survives, so long will Fitzgerald's paraphrase of the Quatrains of Omar Khayyam link with indissoluble bonds the name of the shy, sensitive poet of East Anglia, to that of the genial philosopher and astronomer of Persia. Surely it was almost beyond the scope of imagination to conceive that two poets apparently so dissimilar in race and character, separated so widely by time and space, should at last come together in so perfect a collaboration. It is idle to attempt to apportion the degrees of indebtedness of each to the other as regards the estimation in which the "Rubaiyat" is held by modern readers; for it is almost impossible to think of them except as one. That their paths should have crossed at just that period of the World's development when the philosophy of the Persian poet would make its most potent appeal to men and women, already becoming restive under the pressure of the mechanical monotony of daily life, and racked by the cares incidental to the fierce struggle for existence, is certainly remarkable. But this is no more wonderful than that the message Omar had to deliver, should find an interpreter in so exquisite and imaginative a master of the most widely distributed language known in the World's history. Those best who know their writings can feel close spiritual relationship amounting

Cecil L. Burns

almost to identity which bound the Persian thinker and his modern interpreter. It over stepped the physical obstacle of a gap of nearly a thousand years, separating their earthly pilgrimages, and surmounting the vast differences of their individual environments. Especially is this sentiment uppermost when standing in the churchyard of the quiet Suffolk hamlet of Boulge, where Fitzgerald was born, where he passed a great part of his life, and where his resting place is marked by a flat granite stone. For at the head of this stone is a memorial which expresses in a beautiful manner this feeling of the identity of Omar and Fitzgerald, and is a simple act of homage to them jointly. It takes the form of a rose bush, of a not uncommon variety, or of any special character, but its origin, history, and the circumstances under which it was planted at the head of Fitzgerald's grave, mark it as the embodiment of the romance of hero-worship. Its presence there is due to the veneration for the Persian and English poets held by two men, William Simpson and Edward Clodd.

* * * *

Simpson was as untiring a traveller as he was a prolific draughtsman, and it was in the course of one of his expeditions, as artist for the "Illustrated London News," attached to the Afghan Boundary Commission in 1884, that he found himself at Naishapur. Shortly before this, Fitzgerald's paraphrase of the "Rubaiyat" had begun to issue from the obscurity which marked its first publication. Simpson had read it, and had been immensely impressed by its beauty. He was not acquainted with the Persian original, and probably knew as little of Fitzgerald as the rest of the world, outside a very restricted circle of old

personal friends of the Suffolk recluse. Knowing, however, that Omar Khayyam was buried at Naishapur, he searched out his tomb. Of it, he made a sketch, and plucked some leaves and seed pods from a rose bush growing close by. Tendrils of this rose overhung the poet's resting place, thus fulfilling Omar's desire expressed to his pupil Nizami "My tomb shall be in a spot where the North wind may scatter roses on it". Omar died in A.D. 1123, and was buried at Naishapur by a rose garden, and when Nizami visited the place some years after, he found the trees had stretched their boughs over the wall, and dropped their blossoms on the tomb. The leaves and seed pods gathered by Simpson were enclosed in the following letter to Quaritch, the publisher of Fitzgerald's version of the "Rubaiyat".

Naishapur October 27th, 1884.

Dear Mr. Quaritch,

From the association of your name with that of Omar Khayyam I feel sure that what I enclose in this letter will be acceptable. The rose leaves I gathered to-day at this place, and the seeds are from the same bushes on which the leaves grew. In all probability they are the particular kind of roses Omar Khayyam was so fond of watching as he pondered and composed his verses. I hope you will be able to grow them in England.

Yours very truly, WILLIAM SIMPSON

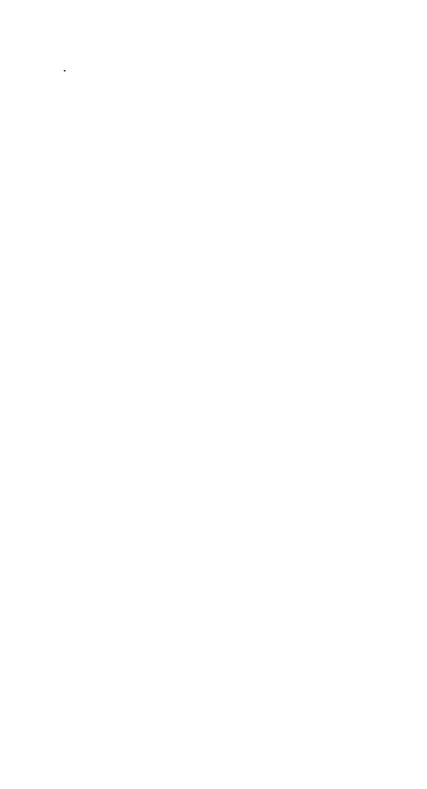
William Simpson's professional engagements during the succeeding years took him to all parts of the world, and the incident, together

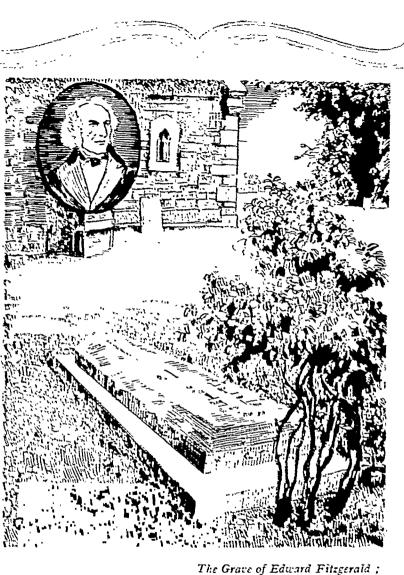
Cecil L. Burns

with the fate of the seeds sent to Quaritch, appear to have been forgotten. During the intervals between his many journeys, Simpson occupied rooms in Lincoln's Inn Fields; and while in London he became acquainted with Edward Clodd. In the course of a conversation between them, the subject of Omar Khayyam came up, when Simpson recalled his visit to Naishapur, and related the incident of his plucking leaves and seeds from the rose bushes growing by the tomb of the Persian poet. He told the story of their despatch to Quaritch, expressing some curiosity as to whether the seeds had ever been sown, and if so, with what success. His hearer, Edward Clodd, was, in in his own way, a man as remarkable, character and attainments, as Simpson. Being an intense admirer of Fitzgerald's genius, Simpson's story of the rose leaves and seeds plucked from Omar's tomb, fired the sympathetic imagination of Edward Clodd. Simpson left England soon after, but Clodd with characteristic ardour and enthusiasm, took up the quest of the missing seeds. Quaritch remembered having received them, and having forwarded them to Kew. The aid of Sir Thistleton Dyer, the Director of the Royal Gardens, was enlisted. His researches resulted in the discovery that the seeds had been sown, and that from them, certain attenuated plants had sprung. These were indentified and cuttings were graced on to sweet briar stocks, which in a few years attained sturdy growth.

Meanwhile the years as they passed had seen the whole English speaking world captured by the spell of Fitzgerald's paraphrase. Wherever the English language was read the "Quatrains" had become a classic. Innumerable editions had been published, together with literal

translations side by side with the Persian original, whereby the least learned or judicial could see how little of the mere transcript there was in the version of the English poet. In England, the Dominions, and America, Societies and Clubs were established to honour the memory of the two poets. The most important of these was one which numbered among its members many of the better known English writers, of the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, including Edward Clodd. When therefore the facts concerning the plucking of the seeds from the rose bushes growing ing of the seeds from the rose bushes growing by Omar's temb by Simpson, the tracing of them by Cladd, and the raising of the plants at Kew, became known, the proposal to plant what Grant Allen aptly and appropriately termed "these flowers of Iran on an English stock," upon Fitzgerald's grave, met with the enthusiastic approval of the members. With due ceremony a pilgrimage was made to the lonely churchyard at Boulge, and the bushes were reverently planted. There they continue to flourish. Thus, the summer sun in its course colours the blooms on the ancient rose bushes colours the blooms on the ancient rose bushes whose petals the North wind scatters over the tomb of Omar at Naishapur, and ere its course is completed the descendants of these roses cast delicate patterns of light and shade upon the Suffolk resting place of him who reclothed old Omar's thoughts in immortal English verse. To the casual visitor knowing nothing of their origin the rose bushes in Boulge churchyard have no special significance; but to the pilgrim to whom the history of this touching memorial has been revealed, not only do they transport his thoughts to far off Naishapur, but fragrant as their scent, is the testimony they bear to the imagination and reverent enthusiasm of the

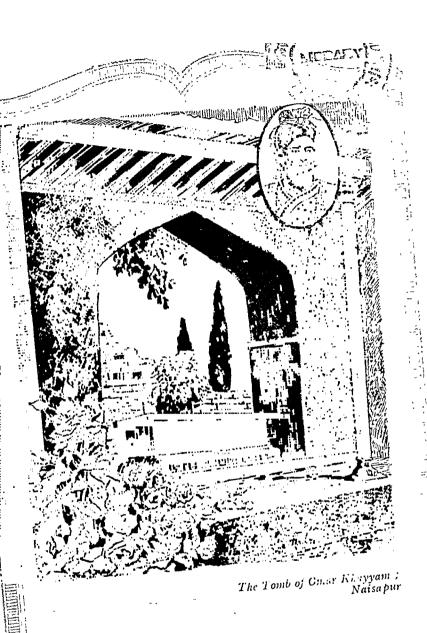




The Grave of Edward Fitzgerald; Boulge, Suffolk.

THE ROSES OF EDWARD FITZGERALD

"Long with a double fragrance let it bloom This Roses of Iran on the English stock."



THE ROSES OF OMAR KHAYYAM

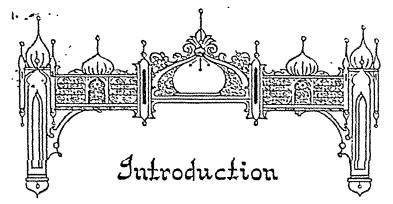
"My tomb shall be in a spot, where the north wind may scatter roses on it." Omar Khayyam.



Cecil L. Burns

two men to whom this delicate tribute owes its origin, William Simpson and Edward Clodd.





OMAR KHAYYAM was born at Naishapur in Khorassan in the latter half of our Eleventh, and died within the First Quarter of our Twelfth Century. The slender story of his Life is curiously twined about that of two other very considerable Figures in their Time and Country: one of whom tells the Story of all Three. This was Nizam ul Mulk, Vizier to Alp Arslan the Son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble Successor of Mahmud the Great, and founded that Seljukian Dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizam ul Mulk, in his Wasiyat, or Testament—which he wrote and left as a Memorial for future Statesmen-relates the following, as quoted in the Calcutta Review, No. lix, from Mirkhond's History of the Assassins:

"One of the greatest of the wise men of Khorassan was the Imam Mowaffak of Naishapur, a man highly honoured and reverenced—may God rejoice his soul; his illustrious years exceeded eighty-five, and it was the universal belief that every boy who read the Koran or studied the traditions in his presence, would assuredly attain to honour and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tus to Naishapur with Abd-us-samad, the Doctor of Law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that illustrious

teacher. Towards me he ever turnèd an ever of favour and kindness, and as his pupil I felt for him extreme affection and devotion, so that I passed four years in his service. When I first came there, I found two other pupils of mine own age newly arrived, Hakim Omar Khayvam, and the illfated Ben Sabbah. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers; and we three formed a close friendship together. When the Imam rose from his lectures, they used to join me, and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now Omar was a native of Naishapur, while Hasan Ben Sabbah's father was one Ali, a man of austere life and practice, but heretical in his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to me and to Khayyam, "It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imam Mowaffak will attain to fortune. Now, even if we all do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?" We answered, "Be it what you please."—"Well," he said, "let us make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself."—"Be it so," we both replied, and on those terms we mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khorassan to Transoxiana, and wandered to Ghazni and Cabul; and when I returned, was invested with office, and rose to be administrator of affairs during the Sultanate of Sultan Alp Arslan.'

"He goes on to state, that years passed by, and both his old school friends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the schooldayvow. The Vizier was generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a place in the government, which

the Sultan granted at the Vizier's request; but, discontented with a gradual rise, he plunged into the maze of intrigue of an Oriental Court, and, failing in a base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the Ismailians, a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A.D. 1090, he seized the Castle of Alamut, in the province of Rudbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian Sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the crusaders as the OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS, and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word Assassin, which they have left in the language of modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the hashish, or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian bhang), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of Oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days, at Naishapur. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizam ul Mulk himself. the old school-boy friend.*

"Omar Khayyam also came to the Vizier to claim his share; but not to ask for title or office. 'The greatest boon you can confer on me,' he said, 'is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity.' The Vizier tells us that,

^{*} Some of Omar's Rubaiyat warn us of the danger of Greatness, the instability of Fortune, and while advocating Charity to all Men, recommending us to be too intimate with none. Attar makes Nizam ul Mulk use the very words of his friend Omar [Rub. xxviii.], "When Nizam ul Mulk was in the Agony (of Death) he said, 'Oh God! I am passing away in the hand of the Wind.'"

when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further, but granted him a yearly pension of 1,200 mithkals of gold,

from the treasury of Naishapur.

"At Naishapur thus lived and died Omar Khayyam, 'busied,' adds the Vizier, 'in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained to a very high pre-eminence. Under the Sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to Merv, and obtained great praise for his proficiency in Science, and the Sultan showered favours upon him.'

"When Malik Shah determined to reform the Calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the Jalali era (so called from Jalal-ud-din, one of the king's names)—'a computation of time,' says Gibbon, 'which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.' He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled Ziji-Malikshahi," and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic Treatise of his on Algebra.

"His Takhallus or poetical name (Khayyam) signifies a Tentmaker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before Nizam ul Mulk's generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derive their names from their occupations; thus we have Attar, 'a druggist,' Assar, 'an oil presser,' etc.* Omar himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:—

"Khayyam, who stitched the tents of Science, Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly

burned;

The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,

^{*} Though all these, like our Smiths, Archers, Millers, Fletchers, etc., may simply retain the Surname of an hereditary calling.

And the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!"

"We have only one more anecdote to give of

"We have only one more anecdote to give of his life, and that relates to the close; it is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his poems; it has been printed in the Persian in the Appendix to Hyde's Veterum Persarum Religio, p. 499; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his Bibliotheque, under Khiam*:

"It is written in the chronicles of the ancients that this King of the Wise, Omar Khayyam, died at Naishapur in the year of the Hegira 517 (A.D. 1123); in Science he was unrivalled,—the very paragon of his age. Khwajah Nizami of Samarcand, who was one of his pupils, relates the following story: "I often used to hold conversations with my teacher Omar Khayyam, in a garden; and one day he said to me, 'My tomb shall be in a spot where the North wind may scatter roses over it.' I wondered at the words he spake, but I knew that his were no idle words.† Years after, when I chanced to revisit Naishapur, I went to his final restingplace, and lo! it was just outside a garden,

^{* &}quot;Philosophe Musulman qui a vêcu en Odeur de Sainteté dans sa Religion, vers la Fin du premier et le Commencement du second Siécle," no part of which, except the "Philosophe," can apply to our Khayyam.

[†] The Rashness of the Words, according to D'Herbelot, consisted in being so opposed to those in the Koran: "No Man knows where he shall die."—This story of Omar reminds me of another so naturally—and when one remembers how wide of his humble mark the noble sailor aimed—so pathetically told by Captain Cook—not by Doctor Hawkesworth—in his Second Voyage (i, 374). When leaving Ulietea, "Oreo's last request was for me to return. When he saw he could not obtain that promise, he asked the name of my Marai (burying-place). As strange a question as this was, I hesitated not a moment to tell him 'Stepney': the parish in which I live when in London. I was made to ropeat it several times over till they could pronounce it; and then 'Stepney Marai no Toote' was echoed through an hundred mouths at once. I afterwards found the same question had been put to Mr. Forster by a man on shore; but he gave a different, and indeed more proper answer, by saying, 'No man who used the sea could say where he should be buried.'"

and trees laden with fruit stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and dropped their flowers upon his tomb, so that the stone was hidden under them."

Thus far—without fear of Trespass—from the Calcutta Review. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's Account of finding Archimedes' Tomb at Syracuse, buried in grass and weeds. I think Thorwaldsen desired to have roses grow over him; a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However, to return to Omar.

Though the Sultan "shower'd Favours upon him," Omar's Epicurean Audacity of Thought and Speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own Time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sufis, whose Practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts to little more than his own, when stript of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not Their Poets, including Hafiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely, indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical Use more convenient to Themselves and the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the Next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of Heart as well as of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any World but This. he set about making the most of it; preferring rather

to soothe the Soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with Things as he saw them, than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they might be. It has been seen, however, that his Worldly Ambition was not exorbitant; and he very likely takes a humorous or perverse pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the Questions in which he, in common with all men, was most vitally interested.

For whatever Reason, however, Omar, as before said, has never been popular in his own Country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS. of his Poems, mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription, are so rare in the East as scarce to have reached Westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms and Science. There is no copy at the India House, none at the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris. We know but of one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley MSS. at the Bodleian, written at Shiraz, A.D. 1460. This contains but 158 Rubaiyats. One in the Asiatic Society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a Copy) contains (and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and Corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of his Copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Sprenger catalogues the Lucknow MS. at double that number.* The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS. seem to do their Work under a sort of Protest; each beginning with a Tetrastich (whether genuine or not), taken out of its alphabetical order; the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of

^{* &}quot;Since this Paper was written" (adds the Reviewer in a note), "we have met with a Copy of a very rare Edition, printed at Calcutta in 1836. This contains 438 Tetrastichs, with an Appendix containing 54 others not found in some MSS."

Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MS.) to have arisen from a Dream, in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus—

"Oh Thou who burn'st in Heart for those

who burn

In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn; How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!' Why, who art Thou to teach, and

He to learn?"

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification.

"If I myself upon a looser Creed Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed, Let this one thing for my Atonement plead: That One for Two I never did mis-read."

The Reviewer,* to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's life, concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the Circumstances in which he lived. indeed, were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better Hope as others, with no better Revelation to guide them, had yet made a Law Lucretius, indeed, with such to themselves. material as Epicurus furnished, satisfied himself with the theory of a vast machine fortuitously constructed, and acting by a Law that implied no Legislator; and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of

^{*} Professor Cowell.

Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe which he was part Actor in; himself and all about him (as in his own sublime description of the Roman Theatre) discoloured with the lurid reflex of the Curtain suspended between the Spectator and the Sun. Omar, more desperate, or more careless of any so complicated System as resulted in nothing but hopeless Necessity, flung his own Genius and Learning with a bitter or humorous jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, pretending sensual pleasure as the serious purpose of Life, only diverted himself with speculative problems of Deity, Destiny, Matter and Spirit, Good and Evil, and other such questions, easier to start than to run down, and the pursuit of which becomes a very weary sport at last!

With regard to the present Translation. The original Rubaiyat (as, missing an Arabic Guttural, these Tetrastichs are more musically called) are independent Stanzas, consisting each of four Lines of equal, though varied, Prosody; sometimes all rhyming, but oftener (as here imitated) the third line a blank. Somewhat as in the Greek Alcaic, where the penultimate line seems to lift and suspend the Wave that falls over in the last. As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the Rubaiyat follow one another according to Alphabetic Rhyme—a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the "Drink and make-merry," which (genuine or not) recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the Result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry: more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tentmaker, who, after vainly endeavouring to

unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to caten some authentic Glimpse of To-Morrow, fell back upon To-DAY (which has outlasted so many To-morrows!) as the only Ground he had got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.

While the second Edition of this version of Omar was preparing, Monsieur Nicolas, French Consul at Resht, published a very careful and very good Edition of the Text, from a lithograph copy at Teheran, comprising 464 Rubaiyat, with translation and notes of his own.

Mons. Nicolas, whose Edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material Epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a Mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of Wine, Wine-bearer, etc., as Hafiz is supposed to do; in short, a Sufi Poet like Hafiz and the rest.

I cannot see reason to alter my opinion, formed as it was more than a dozen years ago when Omar was first shown me by one to whom I am indebted for all I know of Oriental, and very much of other, literature. He admired Omar's Genius so much, that he would gladly have adopted any such Interpretation of his meaning as Mons. Nicolas' if he could*. That he could not, appears by his Paper in the Calcutta Review already so largely quoted; in which he argues from the Poems themselves, as well as from what records remain of the Poet's Life.

And if more were needed to disprove Mons. Nicolas' Theory, there is the Biographical Notice which he himself has drawn up in direct contradiction to the Interpretation of the Poems given

^{*} Perhaps would have edited the Poems himself some years ago. He may now as little approve of my Version on one side, as of Mons. Nicolas' Theory on the other.

in his Notes. (See pp. xiii, xiv of his Preface). Indeed I hardly knew poor Omar was so far gone till his Apologist informed me. For here we see that, whatever were the Wine that Hafiz drank and sang, the veritable Juice of the Grape it was which Omar used, not only when carousing with his friends, but (says Mons. Nicolas) in order to excite himself to that pitch of Devotion which others reached by cries and "hurlemens". And yet, whenever Wine, Winebearer, etc., occur in the text—which is often enough—Mons. Nicolas carefully annotates "Dieu", "La Divinité", etc.: so carefully indeed that one is tempted to think that he was indoctrinated by the Sufi with whom he read the Poems. A Persian would naturally wish to vindicate a distinguished Countryman: and a Sufi to enrol him in his own sect, which already comprises all the chief poets in Persia.

What historical authority has Mons. Nicolas to show that Omar gave himself up "avec passion à l'étude de la philosophie des Soufis"? The Doctrines of Pantheism, Materialism, Necessity, etc., were not peculiar to the Sufi; nor to Lucretius before them; nor to Epicurus before him; probably the very original Irreligion of Thinking men from the first; and very likely to be the spontaneous growth of a Philosopher living in an Age of social and political barbarism, under shadow of one of the Two-and-Seventy Religions supposed to divide the world. Von Hammer (according to Sprenger's Oriental Catalogue) speaks of Omar as "a Freethinker, and a great opponent of Sufism"; perhaps because, while holding much of their Doctrine, he would not pretend to any inconsistent severity of morals. Sir W. Ouseley has written a note to something of the same

effect on the fly-leaf of the Bodleian MS. And in two Rubaiyat of Mons. Nicolas' own Edition Suf and Sufi are both disparagingly named.

No doubt many of these Quatrains seem unaccountable unless mystically interpreted; but many more as unaccountable unless literally. Were the Wine spiritual, for instance, how wash the Body with it when dead? Why make cups of the dead clay to be filled with-"La Divinité"-by some succeeding Mystic? Mons. Nicolas himself is puzzled by some "bizarres" and "trop Orientales" allusions and images— "d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante" in-deed—which "les convenances" do not permit him to translate; but still which the reader cannot but refer to "La Divinité."* No doubt also many of the Quatrains in the Teheran, as in the Calcutta, Copies, are spurious; such Rubaiyat being the common form of Epigram in Persia. But this, at best, tells as much one way as another; nay, the Sufi, who may be considered the Scholar and Man of Letters in Persia, would be far more likely than the careless Epicure to interpolate what favours his own view of the Poet. I observe that very few of the more mystical Quatrains are in the Bodleian MS. which must be one of the oldest, as dated at Shiraz, A.H. 865, A.D. 1460. And this, I think, especially distinguishes Omar (I cannot help calling him by his-no, not Christian-

^{*} A Note to Quatrain 234 admits that, however clear the mystical meaning of such Images must be to Europeans, they are not quoted without "rougissant" even by laymen in Persia—"Quant aux termes de tendresse qui commencent ce quatrain, comme tant d'autres dans ce recueil, nos lecteurs, habitués maintenant à l'étrangeté des expressions si souvent employées per Khéyam pour rendre ses pensées sur l'amour divin, et à la singularité de ses images trop orientales, d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante, n'auront pas de peine à se persuader qu'il s'agit de la Divinité, bien que cette conviction soit vivement discutée par les moullabs musulmans et même par beaucoup de laiques, qui rougissent véritablement d'une pareille licence de leur compatriote à l'égard des choses spirituelles."

Omar Khayyam

familiar name) from all other Persian Poets; That, whereas with them the Poet is lost in his Song, the Man in Allegory and Abstraction; we seem to have the Man—the Bonhomme—Omar himself, with all his Humours and Passions, as frankly before us as if we were really at Table with him, after the Wine had gone round.

I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Hafiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Sufi Pantheism, so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammed at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jelaluddin, Jami, Attar, and others using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the Divinity they were celebrating. Perhaps some Allegory less liable to mistake or abuse had been better among so inflammable a People: much more so when, as some think with Hafiz and Omar, the abstract is not only likened to, but identified with, the sensual Image; hazardous, if not to the Devotee himself, yet to his weaker Brethren; and worse for the Profane in proportion as the Devotion of the Initiated grew warmer. And all for what? To be tantalized with Images of sensual enjoyment which must be nounced if one would approximate a God, who according to the Doctrine, is Sensual Matter as well as Spirit, and into whose Universe one expects unconsciously to merge after Death, without hope of any posthumous Beatitude in another world to compensate for all one's selfdenial in this. Lucretius' blind Divinity certainly merited, and probably got as much self-sacrifice as this of the Sufi; and the burden of Omar's Song—if not "Let us eat"—is assuredly—"Let us drink, for To-morrow we die!" And if Hafiz meant quite otherwise by a similar

Edward Fitzgerald

language, he surely miscalculated when he devoted his Life and Genius to so equivocal a Psalmody as, from his Day to this, has been said and sung by any rather than Spiritual Worshippers.

However, as there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favour of Omar's being a Sufi and even something of a Saint-those who please may so interpret his Wine and Cup-bearer. On the other hand, as there is far historical certainty of his being a Philosopher, of scientific Insight and Ability far beyond that of the Age and Country he lived in; of such moderate worldly Ambition as becomes a Philosopher, and such moderate wants as rarely satisfy a Debauchee; other readers may be content to believe with me that, while the Wine Omar celebrates is simply the Juice of the Grape, he bragged more than he drank of it, in very defiance perhaps of that Spiritual Wine which left its Votaries sunk in Hypocrisy or Disgust.

EDWARD FITZGERALD.





1944 Rubaiyat ^{or} Omar Khayyam

EDWARD FITZGERALD

THE FIRST EDITION 1859





You rising Moon that looks for us again— How oft herefter will she wax and wane; How oft hereafter rising look for us Through this same Garden—and for one in vain!





í

WAKE! for Morning in the Bowl of Night

Has flung the Stone that puts the

Stars to Elight:

And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught.
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.

įį, į.

REAMING when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky

I heard a Voice within the Tavern

cry,

"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup

Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

iii

ND, as the Cock crew, those who stood before

The Tavern shouted—" Open then the Door!

You know how little while we have to stay,

And, once departed, may return no more."

iv

OW the New Year reviving old Desires,

The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires.

Where the WHITE HAND OF Moses on the Bough

the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground
suspires.

v

RAM indeed is gone with all its Rose And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;

But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,

And still a Garden by the Water blows.

vi

ND David's Lips are lock't; but in divine

High piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine!

Red Wine! "—the Nightingale cries to the Rose

That yellow Cheek of hers to incarnadine.

vii

OME, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring

The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

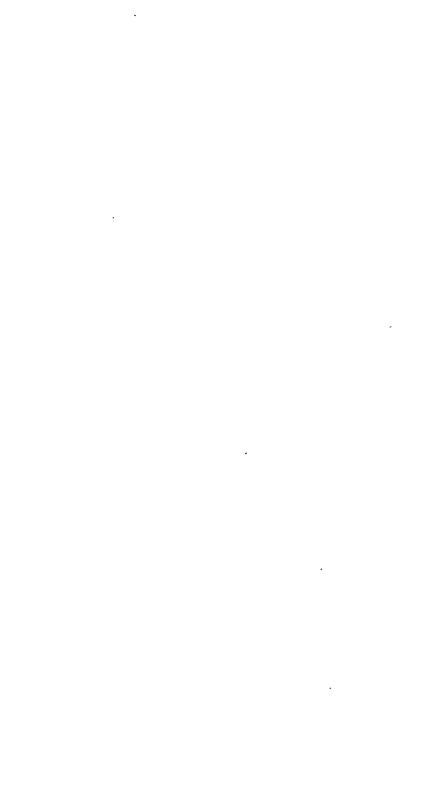


None answer'd this; but after Silence spake

A vessel of a more ungainly Make;

"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;

What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"



viii

ND look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day

Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:

And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose

Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

ix

UT come with old Khayyam, and leave the Lot

Of Kaikobad and Kaikhosru forgot: Let Rustum lay about him as he will, Hatim Tai cry Supper-heed them not.

X

ITH me along some Strip of Herbage strown

That just divides the desert from the sown,

Where name of Slave and Sultan scarce is known,

And pity Sultan Mahmud on his Throne.

хi

ERE with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—

and Thou

Beside me singing in the Wilderness-And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

xii

h h gr

OW sweet is mortal Sovranty !"—think some:

Others—"How blest the Paradise to come!"

Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;

Oh, the brave Music of a distant Drum!

xiii

OOK to the Rose that blows about us —" Lo,

—"Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the World
I blow:

At once the silken Tassel of my Purse Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

xiv

HE Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon

Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,

Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.

xv

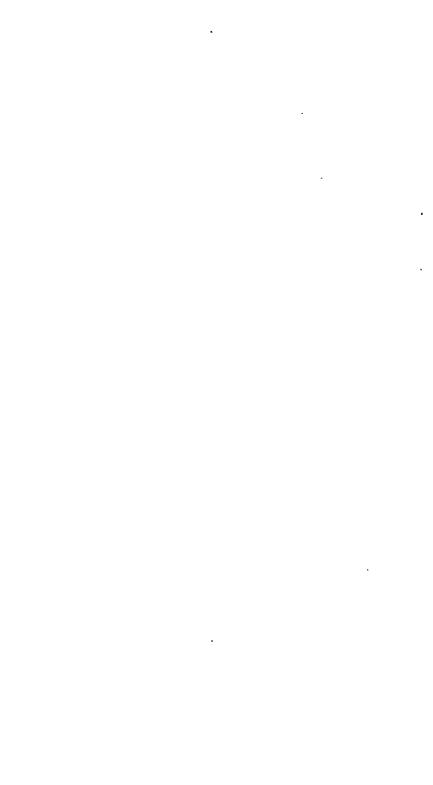
ND those who husbanded the Golden Grain,

And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,

Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd As, buried once, Men want dug up again.



And when Thyself with shining Foot shall pass Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass, And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot Where I made one—turn down an empty Glass.



xvi

HINK, in this batter'd Caravanserai Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,

How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

xvii

HEY say the Lion and the Lizard keep The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep;

And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass

Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

xviii

SOMETIMES think that never blows so red

The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled:

That every Hyacinth the Garden wears Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

xix

ND this delightful Herb whose tender Green

Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—

Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XX

H, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future
Fears—

To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

xxi

That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,

Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,

And one by one crept silently to Rest.

xxii

ND we, that now make merry in the Room

They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom.

Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth

Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

xxiii

H, make the most of what we yet may spend.

Before we too into the Dust descend; Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie, Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and sans End!



Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshy'd and Kaikobád away.

xxiv

LIKE for those who for To-DAY prepare,

And those that after a To-Morrow stare, A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries

"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor

XXV

HY, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd

Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust

Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn

Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

xxvi

H, come with old Khayyam, and leave the Wise

To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;

One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies; The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

xxvii

YSELF when young did eagerly frequent

Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument

About it and about: but evermore Came out by the same Door as in I went.

xxviii

ITH them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,

And with my own hand labour'd it to

grow:

And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—

"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

xxix

NTO this Universe, and why not knowing,

Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flow-

ing:

And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,

I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

xxx

HAT, without asking, hither hurried whence?

And, without asking, whither hurried hence!

Another and another Cup to drown The Memory of this Impertinence!

xxxi

P from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate

I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate.

And many Knots unravel'd by the Road; But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.



Listen again. One evening at the Close Of Ramzán, ere the better Moon arose, In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone With the clay Population round in Rows.



xxxii

HERE was a Door to which I found no Key:

There was a Veil past which I could not

Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE There seem'd—and then no more of THEE and ME.

xxxiii

HEN to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,

cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to
guide

Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"

And—"A blind Understanding!" Heav'n replied.

XXXIV

HEN to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
My Lip the secret well of Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—"While you
live

Drink!—for once dead you never shall return."

XXXV

THINK the Vessel, that with fugitive Articulation answer'd, once did live, And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd

How many Kisses might it take—and give!

xxxvi

OR in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,

I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet

Clay;

And with its all obliterated Tongue It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

xxxvii

H, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat

How Time is slipping underneath our

Feet:

Unborn To-MORROW, and dead YESTER-DAY,

Why fret about them if To-DAY be sweet!

xxxviii

NE Moment in Annihilation's Waste, One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—

The Stars are setting and the Caravan Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

xxxix

OW long, how long, in infinite Pursuit Of This and That endeavour and dispute?

Better be merry with the fruitful Grape Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.



Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.

		,		
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•				
	•			
				•
			-	

x1

OU know, my Friends, how long since in my House

For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:

Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,

And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

xli

OR "Is" and "Is-NOT" though with Rule and Line,

And "UP-AND-DOWN" without, I could define,

I yet in all I only cared to know, Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

xlii

ND lately, by the Tavern Door agape, Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape

Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

xllii

HE Grape that can with Logic absolute The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:

The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.

xliv

HE mighty Mahmud, the victorious Lord.

That all the misbelieving and black Horde

Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul Scatters and slavs with his enchanted Sword.

xlv

UT leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me

The Quarrel of the Universe let be:

And, in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,

Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

xlvi

OR in and out, above, about, below, 'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,

Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun, Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.

xlvii

ND if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,

End in the Nothing all Things end in —Ves—

Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what

Thou shalt be—Nothing—Thou shalt not be less.



Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
Asking, "What Lamp had Destiny to guide
Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?"
And—"A blind Understanding!" Heav'n replied.

xlviii

HILE the Rose blows along the River Brink,

With old Khayyam the Ruby Vintage drink:

And when the Angel with his darker Draught

Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not shrink.

xlix

IS all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days

Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:

Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays.

And one by one back in the Closet lays.

1

HE Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,

But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes:

And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field.

He knows about it all—HE knows—HE knows!

li

HE Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,

Moves on; nor all thy Piety nor Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

lii

ND that inverted Bowl we call The Sky.

Whereunder crawling coopt we live and die.

Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for It Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

liii

E ITH Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man's knead,

And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:

Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

liv

TELL Thee this—When, starting from the Goal,

Over the shoulders of the flaming Foal Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtara they flung,

In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul.

1v

HE Vine had struck a Fibre; which about

If clings my Being—let the Sufi flout; Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key, That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

lvi

ND this I know; whether the one True Light,

Kindle to Love, or Wrath—consume me quite,

One glimpse of It within the Tavern caught

Better than in the Temple lost outright.

lvii

H Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with

Beset the Road I was to wander in, Thou wilt not with Predestination round Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

lviii

H, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,

And who with Eden didst devise the Snake:

For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man

Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

KUZA-NAMA

lix

Of Ramazan, ere the better Moon arose,

In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone With the clay Population round in Rows.

1x

ND, strange to tell, among the Earthen

Some could articulate, while others not:

And suddenly one more impatient cried—"Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

lxi

HEN said another—"Surely not in vain My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en,

That He who subtly wrought me into Shape

Should stamp me back to common Earth again."

lxii

NOTHER said—" Why, ne'er a peevish Boy

Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy;

Shall He that made the Vessel in pure Love

And Fancy, in an after Rage destroy!"

lxiii

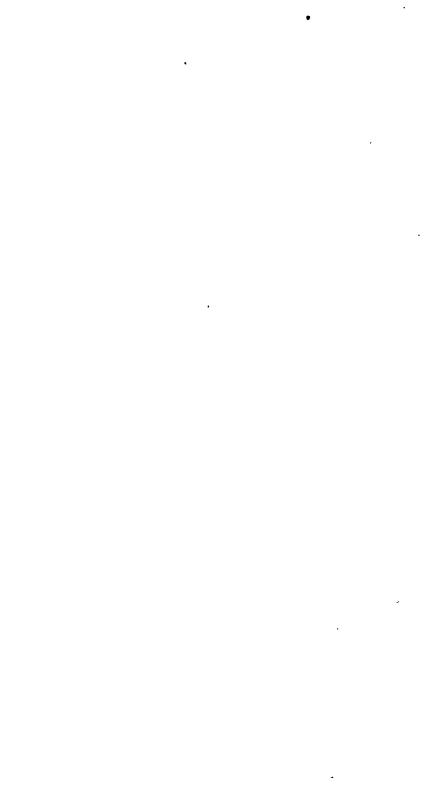
ONE answer'd this; but after Silence spake

A Vessel of a more ungainly Make:

"They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"



Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshy'd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.



1xiv

AID one—"Folks of a surly Tapster tell,

And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell:

They talk of some strict Testing of us—Pish!

He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

lxv

HEN said another with a long-drawn Sigh,

"My Clay with long oblivion is gone

But, fill me with the old familiar Juice, Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"

1xvi

O while the Vessels one by one were speaking,

One spied the little Crescent all were

seeking:

And then they jogg'd each other,

"Brother! Brother!

Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knot acreaking!"

lxvii

H, with the Grape my fading Life provide,

And wash my Body whence the Life

has died,

And in a Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt, So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.



Look to the Rose that blows about us—"Lo, Laughing," she says, "into the World I blow: At once the silken Tassel of my Purse Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

Rubaiyat or Omar Khayyam

EDWARD FITZGERALD





i

AKE! For the Sun behind you Eastern height

Has chased the Session of the Stars from Night:

And, to the field of Heav'n ascending, strikes

The Sultan's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

ii

EFORE the phantom of False morning died,

Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,

"When all the Temple is prepared within, Why lags the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

iii

ND, as the Cock crew, those who stood before

The Tavern shouted—"Open then the door!

You know how little while we have to stay, And, once departed, may return no more."

iv

OW the New Year reviving old Desires,

The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires, Where the White Hand of Moses on the Bough

Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.

۲.

RAM indeed is gone with all his Rose,

And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows:

But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine, And many a Garden by the Water blows.

vi

ND David's lips are lockt; but in divine

High-piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine!

Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose

That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

vii

OME, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring

Your Winter-garment of Repentance

fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.



Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring The Winter Garment of Repentance fling: The Bird of Time has but a little way To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

viii

HETHER at Naishapur or Babylon, Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,

The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop, The Leaves of Life keep falling one by onc.

ix

ORNING, a thousand Roses brings, you say;

Yes, but where leaves the Rose of vesterday?

And this first Summer month that brings the Rose

Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

\mathbf{x}

ELL, let it take them! What have we to do

With Kaikobad the Great, or Kaikhosru?

Let Rustum cry "To Battle!" as he likes,

Or Hatim Tai "To Supper!"—heed not you.

хi

E ITH me along the strip of Herbage strown

That just divides the desert from the sown,

Where name of Slave and Sultan is forgot— And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!

xii

ERE with a little Bread beneath the Bough,

A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou

Beside me singing in the Wilderness—Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

ilix

OME for the Glories of This World; and some

Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;

Ah, take the Cash, and let the Promise go Nor heed the music of a distant Drum!

xiv

ERE it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
The Thread of present Life away to
win—

What? for ourselves, who know not if we shall

Breathe out the very Breath we now breathe in!

$\mathbf{x}\mathbf{v}$

OOK to the blowing Rose about us—

Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow:

At once the silken tassel of my Purse Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

xvi

OR those who husbanded the Golden grain,

And those who flung it to the winds like Rain.

Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd

As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

xvii

HE Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon

Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon, Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face, Lighting a little hour or two—was gone.

xviii

HINK, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and
Day,

How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

xix

HEY say the Lion and the Lizard keep

The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:

And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass

Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

HE Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw.

And Kings the forehead on his threshold

I saw the solitary Ringdove there, And "Coo, coo, coo, "she cried; and coo, coo."

xxi

H, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears To-DAY of past Regret and future Fears; To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

xxii

OR some we loved, the loveliest and the best

That from his Vintage rolling Time has prest,

Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before.

And one by one crept silently to rest.

xxiii

ND we, that now make merry in the Room

They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,

Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth

Descend, ourselves to make a Couch-for whom?



And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky.
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to It for help—for It
As impotently moves as you or I.



XXIV

SOMETIMES think that never blows so red

The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled:

That every Hyacinth the Garden wears Dropt in her lap from some once lovely Head.

XXV

ND this delightful Herb whose living Green

Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—

Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

xxvi

H, make the most of what we yet may spend,

Before we too into the Dust descend; Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie, Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and sans End!

xxvii

LIKE for those who for To-day prepare, And those that after some To-morrow stare,

A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,

"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!"

xxviii

NOTHER Voice, when I am sleeping cries,

"The Flower should open with the

Morning skies."

And a retreating Whisper, as I wake—
"The Flower that once has blown for ever dies."

xxix

HY, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd

Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust

Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn

Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

$\mathbf{x}\mathbf{x}\mathbf{x}$

YSELF when young did eagerly frequent

Doctor and Saint, and heard great

argument

About it and about: but evermore Came out by the same door as in I went.

xxxi

ITH them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,

And with my own hand wrought to make it grow:

And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—

"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

xxxii

NTO this Universe, and Why not knowing, Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:

And out of it, as Wind along the Waste, I know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.

xxxiii

HAT, without asking, hither hurried Whence?

And, without asking, Whither hurried hence!

Ah, contrite Heav'n endowed us with the Vine

To drug the memory of that insolence!

xxxiv

P from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate

I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate, And many Knots unravel'd by the Road; But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXV

HERE was the Door to which I found no Key:

There was the Veil through which I could not see:

Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

xxxvi

ARTH could not answer: nor the Seas that mourn

In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;

Nor Heaven, with those eternal Signs reveal'd

And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

xxxvii

M

HEN of the THEE IN ME who works behind

The Veil of Universe I cried to find A Lamp to guide me through the darkness; and

Something then said—"an Understanding blind."

xxxviii

HEN to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn

I lean'd, the secret Well of Life to learn:

And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—" While you live,

Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return."

xxxix

THINK the Vessel, that with fugitive Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And drink; and that impassive Lip I kiss'd,

How many Kisses might it take—and give!



And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?



x1

OR I remember stopping by the way.
To watch a Potter thumping his wet
Clay:

And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—"Gently, Brother, gently,
pray!"

xli

OR has not such a Story from of Old Down Man's successive generations roll'd

Of such a clod of saturated Earth Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

xlii

ND not a drop that from our Cups we throw

On the parcht herbage but may steal below

To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye

There hidden-far beneath, and long ago.

xliii

Of Heavenly Vintage lifts her chalice up,

Do you, twin offspring of the soil, till Heav'n

To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

xliv

O you, within your little hour of Grace,
The waving Cypress in your Arms
enlace,

Before the Mother back into her arms Fold, and dissolve you in a last embrace.

zIz

ND if the Cup you drink, the Lip you press,

End in what All begins and ends in —Yes:

Imagine then you are what heretofore You were—hereafter you shall not be less.

xlvi

O when at last the Angel of the drink Of Darkness finds you by the river-brink, And, proffering his Cup, invites your Soul Forth to your Lips to quaff it—do not shrink.

xlvii

ND fear not lest Existence closing your

Account, should lose, or know the type no more:

The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour'd Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

xlviii

HEN You and I behind the Veil are past,

Oh but the long long while the World

shall last,

Which of our Coming and Departure heeds As much as Ocean of a pebble-cast.

xlix

NE Moment in Annihilation's Waste, One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—

The Stars are setting, and the Caravan Draws to the Dawn of Nothing—Oh make haste!

1

OULD you that spangle of Existence spend

About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!

A Hair, they say, divides the False and True—

And upon what, prithee, does Life depend?

11

HAIR, they say, divides the False and True;

Yes; and a single Alif were the clue, Could you but find it, to the Treasurehouse,

And peradventure to The Master too;

lii

HOSE secret Presence, through Creation's veins

Running, Quicksilver-like eludes your pains:

Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi; and

They change and perish all—but He remains;

liii

MOMENT guess'd—then back behind the Fold

Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd

Which, for the Pastime of Eternity, He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.

liv

UT if in vain, down on the stubborn floor

Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,

You gaze To-day, while You are You-how then

To-morrow, You when shall be You no more?

1v

H, plagued no more with Human or Divine,

To-morrow's tangle to itself resign, And lose your fingers in the tresses of The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.



And this delightful Herb whose tender Green Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean— Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!



ASTE not your Hour, not in the vain pursuit

Of This and That endeavour and dis-

pute;

Better be merry with the fruitful Grape Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

lvii

OU know, my Friends, how bravely in my House

For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to
Spouse.

lviii

OR "Is" and "Is-nor" though with
Rule and Line
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I
define,
Of all that one should care to father I

Of all that one should care to fathom I, Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

lix

H, but my Computations, People say,
Have squared the Year to human
compass, ch?

If so, by striking from the Calendar Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday

1x

ND lately, by the Tavern Door agape, Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape

Bearing a Vessel on her Shoulder; and He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

1xi

HE Grape that can with Logic absolute The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:

The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

lxii

HE mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,

That all the misbelieving and black Horde

Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

lxiii

HY, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare

Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?

A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?

And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

lxiv

MUST abjure the Balm of Life, I must, Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,

Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink. When the frail Cup in crumbled into Dust!

1xv

F but the Vine and Love-abjuring Band Are in the Prophet's Paradise to stand, Alack, I doubt the Prophet's Paradise Were empty as the hollow of one's Hand.

lxvi

H threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!

One thing at least is certain—This Life flies:

One thing is certain and the rest is Lies; The Flower that once is blown for ever dies.

Ixvii

TRANGE, is it not? that of the myriads who

Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through

Not one returns to tell us of the Road, Which to discover we must travel too.

Ixviii

HE Revelations of Devout and Learn'd Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,

Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep

They told their fellows, and to Sleep return'd.

Ixix

HY, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,

And naked on the Air of Heaven ride, Is't not a shame—is't not a shame for him So long in this Clay suburb to abide!

lxx

UT that is but a Tent wherein may rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash
Strikes, and prepares it for another guest.

ixxl

SENT my Soul through the Invisible, Some letter of that After-life to spell: And after many days my Soul return'd And said, "Behold, Myself am Heav'n and Hell:"



And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on her Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

•			
	•		
		·	

Ixxii

EAV'N but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire, And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire, Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves, So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

lxxiii

Of visionary Shapes that come and go Round with this Sun-illumin'd Lantern held.

In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

1xx iv

MPOTENT Pieces of the Game he plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and
Days;

Hither and thither moves, and checks and slays;

And one by one back in the Closet lays.

Ixxv

HE Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,

But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes:

And He that toss'd you down into the Field.

He knows about it all—HE knows—HE Knows!

lxxvi

HE Moving Finger writes: and, having writ,

Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

lxxvii

OR let Philosopher and Doctor preach Of what they will, and what they will not—each

Is but one Link in an eternal Chain That none can slip, nor break, nor over-reach.

Ixxviii

ND that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,

Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die.

Lift not your hands to It for help—for It As impotently rolls as you or I.

lxxix

ITH Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,

And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:

And the first Morning of Creation wrote What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

lxxx

ESTERDAY This Day's Madness did prepare:

To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or

Despair:

Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why;

Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

lxxxi

TELL you this—When, started from the Goal,

Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtari they flung In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul.

lxxxii

HE Vine had struck a fibre: which about

If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;

Of my Base metal may be filed a Key, That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

Ixxxiii

ND this I know: whether the one True Light.

Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite.

One Flash of It within the Tavern caught Better than in the Temple lost outright.

lxxxiv

HAT! out of senseless Nothing to provoke

A conscious Something to resent the

voke

Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

lxxxv

HAT! from his helpless Creature be repaid

Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-

allay'd— Sue for a Debt we never did contract, And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

lxxxvi

AY, but, for terror of his wrathful Face, I swear I will not call Injustice Grace; Not one Good Fellow of the Tavern but Would kick so poor a Coward from the place.

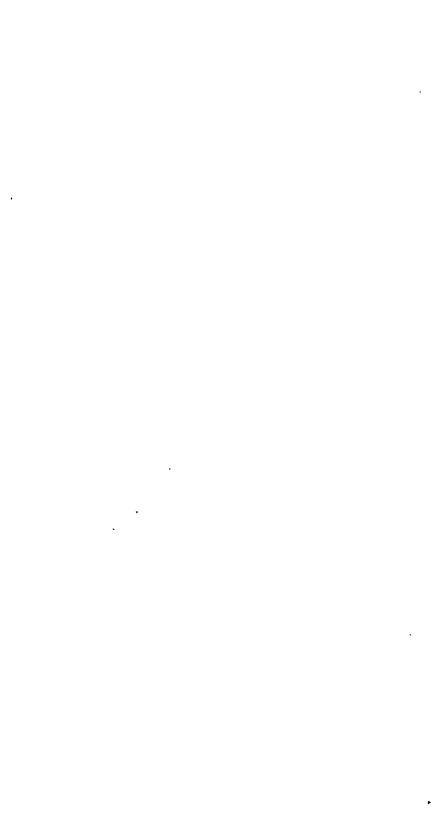
1xxxvii

H Thou, who didst with pitfall and with

Beset the Road I was to wander in, Thou wilt not with Predestin'd Evil round Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin?



A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!



lxxxviii

H thou, who Man_of baser Earth didst make,

And ev'n with Paradise devise the

Snake:

*

For all the Sin the Face of wretched Man Is black with—Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

* *

lxxxix

S under cover of departing Day Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan away, Once more within the Potter's house alone

I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

xc

ND once again there gather'd a scarce heard

Whisper among them; as it were, the stirr'd

Ashes of some all but extinguisht Tongue, Which mine ear kindled into living Word.

xci

AID one among them—"Surely not in vain,

My substance from the common Earth was ta'en.

That He who subtly wrought me into Shape

Should stamp me back to shapeless Earth again?"

xcii

NOTHER said—"Why, ne'er a peevish Boy

Would break the Cup from which he

drank in Joy;

Shall He that of his own free Fancy made The Vessel, in an after-rage destroy!"

xciii

ONE answer'd this; but after silence spake

Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make; "They sneer at me for leaning all awry: What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

xciv

HUS with the Dead as with the Living, What?

And Why? so ready, but the Wherefor not,

One on a sudden peevishly exclaim'd, "Which is the Potter, pray, and which the Pot?"

xcv

AID one—" Folks of a surly Master tell, And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell:

They talk of some sharp Trial of us—Pish!

He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

xevi

ELL" saidanother, "Whoso will, let try,

My Clay with long oblivion is gone

dry:

But fill me with the old familiar Juice, Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"

xcvii

O while the Vessels one by one were speaking,

One spied the little Crescent all were

seeking:

×

And then they jogged each other, "Brother! Brother!

Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

ol:

* xcviii

H, with the Grape my fading Life provide,

And wash my Body whence the Life

has died,

And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf, By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

xcix

HITHER resorting from the vernal Heat

Shall Old Acquaintance Old Acquaintance greet.

Under the Branch that leans above the Wall

To shed his Blossom over head and feet.

c

HEN ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare

Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air. As not a true-believer passing by But shall be overtaken unaware.

ci

NDEED the Idols I have loved so long Have done my credit in Men's eye much wrong:

Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup, And sold my Reputation for a Song.

cii

NDEED, indeed, Repentance oft before I swore—but was I sober when I swore? And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

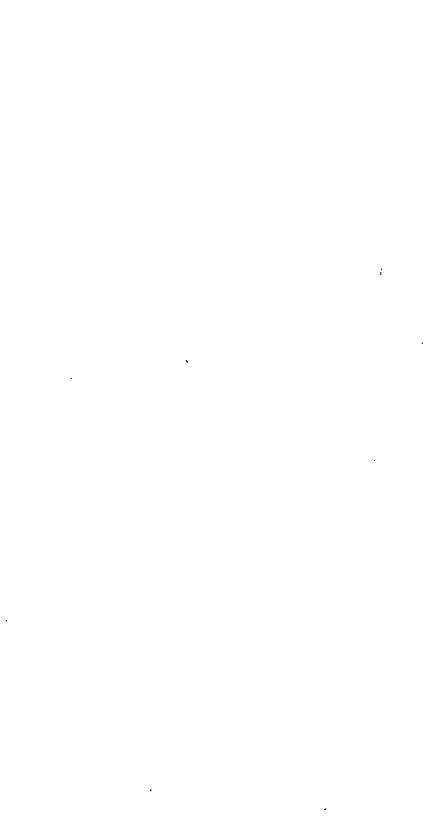
ciii

ND much as Wine has play'd the Infidel, And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,

I often wonder what the Vintners buy One half so precious as the ware they sell.



Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire, Would not we shatter it to bits—and then Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!



civ

ET Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!

That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!

The Nightingale that in the branches sang, Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

 $\mathbf{c}\mathbf{v}$

OULD but the Desert of the Fountain yield

One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed reveal'd,

Toward which the fainting Traveller might spring,

As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

cvi

H if the World were but to re-create.

That we might eatch cre closed the Book of Fate,

And make The Writer on a fairer leaf. Inscribe our names, or quite obliterate!

cvii

Of Universe one luckless Human Soul.
Than drop by drop enlarge the Flood that rolls

Hoarser with Anguish as the Ages roll.

cviii

H Love! could you and I with Fate conspire

To grasp this sorry, Scheme of Things entire.

Would not we shatter it to bits—and then Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

cix

UT see! The rising Moon of Heav'n again

Looks for us, Sweet-heart, through the

quivering Plane:

How oft hereafter rising will she look Among those leaves—for one of us in vain!

$\mathbf{c}\mathbf{x}$

ND when Yourself with silver Foot shall pass

Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the

Grass,

And in your joyous errand reach the spot Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!

TAMAM



And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before The Tayern shouted—"Open then the Door!

You know how little while we have to stry, And, once departed, may return no more."

NOTES

TO THE FOURTH EDITION

(Stanza II.) The "False Dawn"; Subhi Kazib, a Transient Light on the Horizon about an hour before the Subhi Sadik, or True Dawn; a well-known Phenomenon in the East.

(IV). New Year. Beginning with the Vernal Equinox, it must be remembered; and (howsoever the old Solar Year is practically superseded by the clumsy *Lunar* Year that dates from the Mohammedan Hijra) still commemorated by a Festival that is said to have been appointed by the very Jamshyd whom Omar so often talks of, and whose yearly Calendar he helped to rectify.

"The sudden approach and rapid advance of the Spring," says Mr. Binning,* "are very striking. Before the Snow is well off the Ground, the Trees burst into Blossom, and the Flowers start forth from the Soil. At Now Rooz (their New Year's Day) the Snow was lying in patches on the Hills and in the shaded Vallies, while the Fruit-trees in the Gardens were budding beautifully, and green Plants and Flowers springing up on the Plains on every side—

'And on old Hyems' Chin and icy Crown An odorous Chaplet of sweet Summer buds Is, as in mockery, set.'—

Among the plants newly appeared I recognized some old Acquaintances I had not seen for many a Year: among these, two varieties of the Thistle—a coarse species of Daisy like the 'Horse-gowan'—red and white Clover—the Dock—the blue Corn-flower—and that vulgar Herb the Dandelion rearing its yellow crest on the Banks of the Water-courses." The Nightingale was not yet heard, for the Rose was not yet blown; but an almost identical Blackbird and Wood-pecker helped to make up something of a North-country Spring.

^{*}Two Years' Travel in Persia, etc., i. 165.

Notes

- "The White Hand of Moses," Exodus iv. 6, where Moses draws forth his Hand—not, according to the Persians, "leprous as Snow,"—but white, as our Mayblossom in Spring perhaps. According to them also the Healing Power of Jesus resided in His Breath.
 - (v.) Iram, planted by King Shaddad, and now sunk somewhere in the Sands of Arabia. Jamshyd's Sevenring'd Cup was typical of the 7 Heavens, 7 Planets, 7 Seas, etc., and was a *Divining Cup*.
 - (VI.) Pehlevi, the old Heroic Sanskrit of Persia. Hafiz also speaks of the Nightingale's Pehlevi, which did not change with the People's.

I am not sure if the fourth line refers to the Red Rose looking sickly, or to the Yellow Rose that ought to be Red; Red, White, and Yellow Roses all common in Persia. I think that Southey, in his Common-Place Book, quotes from some Spanish author about the Rose being White till 10 o'clock; "Rosa Perfecta" at 2; and "Perfecta Incarnada" at 5.

- (X.) Rustum, the "Hercules" of Persia, and Zal his Father, whose exploits are among the most celebrated in the Shahnama. Hatim Tai, a well-known type of Oriental Generosity.
 - (XIII.) A Drum-beaten outside a Palace.
 - (XIV.) That is, the Rose's Golden Centre.
- (XVIII.) Persepolis: call'd also Takht-i-Jamshyd—THE THRONE OF JAMSHYD, "King Splendid," of the mythical Peshdadian Dynasty, and supposed (according to the Shahnama) to have been founded and built by him. Others refer it to the Work of the Genie King, Jan Ibn Jan—who also built the Pyramids—before the time of Adam.

BAHRAM GUR—Bahram of the Wild Ass—a Sassanian Sovereign—had also his Seven Castles (like the King of Bohemia!) each of a different Colour: each with a Royal Mistress within; each of whom tells him a Story, as told in one of the most famous Poems of Persia, written by Amir Khusraw: all these Seven also figuring (according to

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Eastern Mysticism) the Seven Heavens; and perhaps the Book itself that Eighth, into which the mystical Seven transcend, and within which they revolve. The Ruins of Three of those Towers are yet shown by the Peasantry; as also the swamp in which Bahram sunk, like the Master of Ravenswood, while pursuing his *Gur*.

The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew—
I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
And "Coo, coo, coo," she cried; and "Coo, coo, coo."

This Quatrain Mr. Binning found, among several of Hafiz and others, inscribed by some stray hand among the ruins of Persepolis. The Ringdove's ancient Pchlevi Coo, Coo, Coo, signifies also in Persian "Where? Where?" In Attar's "Bird-parliament" she is reproved by the Leader of the Birds for sitting still, and for ever harping on that one note of lamentation for her lost Yusuf.

A propos of Omar's Red Roses in Stanza xix., I am reminded of an old English superstition, that our Anemone Pulsatilla, or purple "Pasque Flower" (which grows plentifully about the Fleam Dyke, near Cambridge), grows only where Danish blood has been spilt.

(XXI.) A thousand years to each Planet.

(XXXI.) Saturn, Lord of the Seventh Heaven.

(XXXII.) ME-AND-THEE: some dividual Existence or Personality distinct from the Whole.

(XXXVII.) One of the Persian Poets—Attar, I think—has a pretty story about this. A thirsty Traveller dips his hand into a Spring of Water to drink from. By and by comes another who draws up and drinks from an earthen Bowl, and then departs, leaving his Bowl behind him. The first Traveller takes it up for another draught; but is surprised to find that the same Water which had tasted sweet from his own hand tastes bitter from the earthen Bowl. But a Voice—from Heaven, I think—tells him the clay from which the Bowl is made was once Man; and,

wise and just decrees. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (Rom. ix. 21). And can that earth artificer have a freer power over his brother potsherd (both being made of the same metal), than God hath over him, who, by the strange fecundity of His omnipotent power, first made the clay out of nothing, and then him out of that?"

And again—from a very different quarter—"I had to refer the other day to Aristophanes, and came by chance on a curious Speaking-pot story in the Vespæ, which I had quite forgotten.

"The Pot calls a bystander to be a witness to his bad treatment. The woman says, 'If, by Proserpine, instead of all this "testifying" you would buy yourself a rivet, it would show more sense in you!'

One illustration for the oddity's sake from the Autobiography of a Cornish Rector, by the late James Hamley Tregenna. 1871.

"There was one old Fellow in our Company—he was so like a Figure in the *Pilgrim's Progress* that Richard always called him the 'ALLEGORY,' with a long white beard—a rare Appendage in those days—and a Face the colour of which seemed to have been baked in, like the Faces one used to see on Earthenware Jugs. In our Country-dialect Earthenware is called 'Clome'; so the Boys of the Village used to shout out after him—'Go back to the Potter, old Clome-face, and get baked over again.' For the 'Allegory,' though shrewd enough in most things, had the reputation of being saift-baked, i.e., of weak intellect."

(XC.) At the Close of the Fasting Month, Ramazan (which makes the Mussulman unhealthy and unamiable), the first Glimpse of the New Moon (who rules their division of the year) is looked for with the utmost Anxiety, and hailed with Acclamation. Then it is that the Porter's

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Knot may be heard—toward the Cellin. On at has elecwhere a pretty Quatrain about the same Moon-

"Be of Good Cheer—the sullen Month will die.

And a young Moon requite us by and by:

Look how the Old one, meagie, bent, and wan With Age and Fast, is fainting from the Sky!"



EDWARD FITZGERALD

The "Gray of the 19th Century," writer of one immortal poem, Edward Fitzgerald was born of Irish parentage at Bredfield House, Suffolk, on March 31, 1809. Educated at King Edward VI's School, he joined Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826 and on leaving the University with his degree in 1830, he lived at near Woodbridge almost continuously till death.

A lover of books and flowers, Fitzgerald led a quiet and uninterrupted country-life, save for occasional visits to London. Vachting and gardening were his favourite amusements, and the delightful friendship with some of the choicest spirits of the age—Tennyson, Thackeray, Cowell, Groome, Spedding, and Barton, whose daughter, Lucy, he married,—remained the object dearest to the heart of this warm and wistful scholarly recluse, till his death on 14th June, 1883.

Fitzgerald's first work, Euphranor, a dialogue on youth, was published anonymously in 1851, and this was followed a year later by Polonius. A translation from Spanish of Calderon's dramas (1853) was soon withdrawn from circulation. Fitzgerald turned his attention from Spanish to Persian and, in 1856, published anonymously a version of Jami's Salamon and Absal. About this time, while visiting the Bodleian Library, he felt attracted by the works of Omar Khayyam, the Persian astronomerpoet of the 11th century, who was then little known save through a French translation issued at Paris by M. Nicolas in 1857. Fitzgerald at

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once recognized the beauty of Omar's Rulance (Quatrains), which held for him a subtly spiritual appeal, and his rendering of the Rubinian with all the variations of their moving metals indissolubly linked the names of Omar and Fitzgerald for all times. The Rubaivat of them Khavvam, published anonymously in 1859, flamed into prominence after a brief initial period of obscurity. Fitzgerald is, in spite of all the bold liberties that he takes with the original. in perfect accord with the Persian poet, whose moods he rightly interprets and melodies he sweetly echoes. Though Omar's ideas are often amended, compressed and shifted. Fitzgerahi's version never misses the spirit of the "hickeips ing Pehlevi" of Persia.

OMAR KHAYYAM

Omar Khayyam or Umar Khayyam (c. 1050-... 1123) the astronomer-poet of Persia was born at Naishapur in Khorassan. He was known to have reformed the Muslim Calendar, and one of his Arabic mathematical treatises was edited and translated by Woepke (1851). It was as a mathematician that Omar was known to the western world until in 1859 Edward Fitzgerald introduced Omar as the agnostic poet of pessimism by his "Translation" of seventy-five of Omar's Rubaiyat or Quatrains.

The original Rubaiyat of Omar must have passed through a process of transformation after Omar's death and the Rubaiyat can now be regarded as nothing but an anthology of many hands with little or nothing of the original of Omar in it. Omar's verse therefore now appears to be a strange mixture of bold philosophic speculations and convivial musing on roses and wine. It is a curious medley striking on various notes, sweet and strong, sad and wistful with a dash of bold protest against the narrowness and bigotry against the theology of the period.

